

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 – 9 (Withdrawn)

10. (Amended) A midsole assembly for a running sandal configured to receive a foot of a wearer, the midsole assembly comprising:

a flexible midsole body having a heel portion, an arch portion, and a forefoot portion, the midsole body having a footbed surface that supports the foot of the wearer; and

a curved forefoot plate connected to the forefoot portion of the flexible midsole body, wherein the curved forefoot plate at the forefoot portion has a partially concave shape and a stiffness greater than the stiffness of the midsole body, and wherein the curved forefoot plate has an integral flexible portion extending substantially between a lateral and medial side of the curved forefoot plate when the sandal is assembled, wherein the curved forefoot plate includes an integral central stiffening rib extending longitudinally.

11. (Original) The midsole assembly of claim 10 wherein the curved forefoot plate is seated within a recessed area formed in the midsole body.

12. (Original) The midsole assembly of claim 10 wherein the integral flexible portion of the curved forefoot plate includes a flex groove.

13. (Original) The midsole assembly of claim 10 wherein the midsole body is made of a first material and where the curved forefoot plate is made of a second material that is less flexible than the first material.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The midsole assembly of claim 10 wherein the curved forefoot plate includes integral outer stiffening ribs extending longitudinally.

16. (Original) The midsole assembly of claim 10 wherein the curved forefoot plate includes side tabs that seat within a correspondingly shaped shallow cavity formed in the midsole body.

Claims 17 – 26. (Withdrawn)

Please add the following new claims:

27. (New) A midsole assembly for a running sandal configured to receive a foot of a wearer, the midsole assembly comprising:

a flexible midsole body having a heel portion, an arch portion, and a forefoot portion, the midsole body having a footbed surface that supports the foot of the wearer; and

a curved forefoot plate connected to the forefoot portion of the flexible midsole body, wherein the curved forefoot plate at the forefoot portion has a partially concave shape and a stiffness greater than the stiffness of the midsole body, and wherein the curved forefoot plate has an integral flexible portion extending substantially between a lateral and medial side of the curved forefoot plate when the sandal is assembled wherein the curved forefoot plate includes integral outer stiffening ribs extending longitudinally.

28. (New) The midsole assembly of claim 27 wherein the curved forefoot plate is seated within a recessed area formed in the midsole body.

29. (New) The midsole assembly of claim 27 wherein the integral flexible portion of the curved forefoot plate includes a flex groove.

30. (New) The midsole assembly of claim 27 wherein the midsole body is made of a first material and where the curved forefoot plate is made of a second material that is less flexible than the first material.

31. (New) The midsole assembly of claim 27 wherein the curved forefoot plate includes side tabs that seat within a correspondingly shaped shallow cavity formed in the midsole body.